

South Dakota National Guard

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NEWS RELEASE:

Civil Support Team trains on scenario similar to Missouri River flooding

Staff Sgt. Alex Raber
82nd Civil Support Team

STURGIS, S.D. – A team of South Dakota National Guardsmen were engaged in an exercise, Wednesday, June 15, 2011. Equipped with irrigation boots, handheld GPS units and state of the art hazardous materials detectors, they walked carefully near Sturgis creek to locate and identify “exercise” potential hazards to people and the environment.

Soldiers and Airmen from the 82nd Civil Support Team (CST), based out of Ellsworth Air Force Base, Rapid City, were training for scenarios that they may see if requested to support the flood operations on the Missouri River. The purpose of this training exercise was to locate, mark, identify and possibly recover hazardous materials containers washed ashore after the flood waters recede.

“Our hazardous materials training has not only prepared our team for weapons of mass destruction responses, but has also enabled us to adapt to more traditional responses such as natural disasters,” said 1st Lt. Eric Tobin, survey team leader.

Teams patrol the waterway and flood plain locating containers. Once a container is located and deemed safe, they radio back the coordinates and label the container. The coordinates are then plotted on a map of the search area so they can be collected and disposed of properly.

“Doing training like this prepares us for what we might be asked to do if called up to help support the flood effort,” said Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Baumann, reconnaissance noncommissioned officer. “We conducted operations very similar to this when we supported Hurricane Ike in 2008.”

The containers were being simulated as being washed up by the flood waters, representing anything from household chemicals to industrial chemicals that could be harmful to the environment and the public.

“It is very important to ensure that they are found and then brought to a central location for disposal,” Baumann said.

The CST assists military and civilian authorities with natural and/or man-made disasters and events that may include chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials.

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STURGIS, S.D. – South Dakota National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Baumann, of the 82nd Civil Support Team, Rapid City, places a GPS unit to identify the location of a container, Wednesday, June 15, 2011. The CST assists military and civilian authorities with natural and/or man-made disasters and events that may include chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Alex Raber)

STURGIS, S.D. – Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Baumann (left) and Staff Sgt. Alex Raber, of the 82nd Civil Support Team, Rapid City, return to the container collection point during an exercise Wednesday, June 15, 2011. The CST assists military and civilian authorities with natural and/or man-made disasters and events that may include chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials. (SDNG photo by Maj. Dale Gadbois)



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